



AN AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW: George Washington

Letter to Joseph Reed, August 22, 1779:

When I came to Fort Lee, and found no measure taken toward evacuation. . . ; when I found General Greene, of whose judgment and candour I entertained a good opinion, decidedly opposed to it; when I found other opinions coincident with his; when the wishes of Congress to obstruct the navigation of the North River, which were delivered in such forcible terms to me recurred; when I knew that the easy communication between the different parts of the army, then separated by the river, depended upon it; and, lastly, when I considered that our policy led us to waste the campaign without coming to a general action on the one hand, or suffering the enemy to overrun the country on the other, I conceived that every impediment which stood in their way was a means to answer these purposes; and when thrown into the scale with those opinions, which were opposed to an evacuation, caused that warfare in my mind, and hesitation, which ended in the loss of the garrison; and, being repugnant to my own judgment of the advisableness of attempting to hold the post, filled me with regret.

Source: William B. Reed, ed. *Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed* (Philadelphia, 1847).